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National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*

Senegal

I. Introduction and methodology for preparation of the report

1. This report is submitted in follow-up to the presentation of the second report of Senegal to the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review at its seventeenth session in 2013. It reflects the efforts to implement the recommendations that Senegal had accepted.

2. With technical and financial support from the Regional Office for West Africa of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, based in Dakar, the Ministry of Justice, through the National Advisory Council on Human Rights, led the process of preparing the report. The National Advisory Council on Human Rights is a standing government body, made up of representatives of all ministerial departments, of a large number of the most representative civil society organizations, and also of the national human rights institution — the Senegalese Human Rights Committee — and of Parliament.

3. A national action plan for the period 2016–2018 was drafted by a technical committee composed of focal points from key ministries, appointed by the National Advisory Council on Human Rights. The draft report was drawn up on the basis of the information that had been gathered and was then considered at a dissemination and validation workshop with the participation of national institutions and civil society.

4. The methodology for preparation of the report was based on a participatory approach conducive to creating genuine consensus between the State and civil society, ensuring that it was properly national in character.

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II. Development of the normative and institutional framework

A. Normative framework

5. Pursuant to Constitutional Act No. 2016-10 of 5 April 2016, the Constitution of Senegal has undergone a major process of referendum-based reform. One of the key points of this reform is the inviolability of the provisions relating to the method by which the President of the Republic is elected, the length of the President's term of office and the number of terms that the President can serve. This reform has enhanced democracy and the rule of law through the strengthening of political rights. It has set in place new rights to a healthy environment and a better distribution of natural resources and land ownership among citizens.

6. Parliament has undergone changes in the area of government oversight and the evaluation of public policies. Thanks to this reform process, 15 seats are now allocated to Senegalese citizens in the diaspora.

7. Since 2013, a number of legislative and regulatory measures have been taken, including:

- Organizational Act No. 2016-23 of 14 July 2016 on the Constitutional Council;
- Organizational Act No. 2016-24 of 14 July 2016 on the organization and functioning of the Supreme Council of Local Authorities;
- Organizational Act No. 2017-09 of 17 January 2017 repealing and replacing Organizational Act No. 2008-35 of 8 August 2008 on the Supreme Court;
- Organizational Act No. 2017-11 of 17 January 2017 on the organization and functioning of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary;
- Organizational Act No. 2017-10 of 17 January 2017 on the status of judges;
- Act No. 2015-15 of 16 July 2015 authorizing the President of the Republic to ratify International Labour Organization Convention No. 183 on maternity protection;
- Act No. 2016-30 of 8 November 2016 on the Mining Code;
- Act No. 2016-31 of 8 November 2016 on social housing policy;
- Act No. 2016-29 of 8 November 2016 amending Act No. 65-60 of 21 July 1965 on the Criminal Code;
- Act No. 2016-30 of 8 November 2016 amending Act No. 65-61 of 21 July 1965 on the Code of Criminal Procedure;
- Act No. 2017-23 of 28 June 2017 amending Act No. 2014-26 of 3 November 2014 on the organization of the judiciary, with the inclusion of commercial courts;
- Act No. 2017-27 of 28 June 2017 on the establishment, organization and operation of commercial courts and commercial chambers of appeal;
- Act No. 2017-16 of 17 February 2017 on the establishment of the National Institute of Experts of Senegal;
- Circular No. 09012/MJ/DACG/mmn of 8 December 2016 on the punishment of murder and similar offences;
- Circular No. 4322/MFPAA/SG/DFPT/ms of 23 December 2016 on incentive measures targeting a number of institutions for vocational training of persons with disabilities;
- Circular No. 04377/MJ/DACG/MN of 14 June 2017 on the release of persons receiving custodial sentences who are discharged or acquitted;
- Circular No. 03319/MJ/DACG/MN of 8 May 2017 on the operation of the committees on the review of sentences;

- Circular No. 00179/MJ/DACG/MN of 11 January 2018 on procedures for the application of article 5 of regulation No. 05/CM/UEMOA and the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure concerning the presence of a lawyer from the time of a person's arrest;
- Decree No. 2014-633 of 7 May 2014 on the procedure for the evaluation of learning at lower secondary and upper secondary levels;
- Decree No. 2017-313 of 15 February 2017 on the establishment of gender units in the general secretariats of the ministries.

B. Institutional framework

1. Senegalese Human Rights Committee

8. In order to comply with the Paris Principles, the Government has taken the following initiatives:

- Provision of new headquarters;
- Increase of the budget from 34 to 50 million CFA francs;
- Preparation of a bill to amend and replace the 1997 Act, which has already been submitted to the relevant stakeholders for advice and comments prior to its submission for adoption by December 2018.

2. National Observatory of Places of Deprivation of Liberty

9. The Observatory is an independent administrative authority, in accordance with article 6 of Act No. 2009-13 of 2 March 2009. The Director of the Observatory does not receive instructions from any authority and is appointed for a non-renewable term of five years, which cannot be terminated, except in the event of resignation or incapacity. The Director benefits from immunities and privileges.

10. The Director has the power to recruit observers and administrative staff, and article 12 of Implementation Decree No. 2011-842 of 16 June 2011 provides that the resources of the Observatory shall be paid into a deposit account in the State Treasury.

11. Since its establishment, its budget has risen from 25 million to 85 million CFA francs in 2018. The Observatory system now has focal points in five regions (Ziguinchor, Matam, Kédougou, Kaolack and Thiès). Its staffing has been strengthened by the addition of a registrar, an assistant and outside observers, including a psychiatrist, an inspector from the Prison Service, a Chief Superintendent of Police and a colonel of the gendarmerie.

12. Inspections carried out by the Observatory have led to the punishment of public officials who have perpetrated abuse against persons deprived of their liberty.

3. National Unit for the Combating of Human Trafficking

13. Given the extent of the practice of human trafficking, and following an evaluation of Act No. 2005-06 of 10 May 2005, the National Unit for the Combating of Human Trafficking has prepared a draft revision of the Act and submitted it for adoption, taking into account the need for technical compliance and effective implementation.

14. Between 2013 and 2018, the Unit's budget has grown from 20 million to 85 million CFA francs and its staffing has been increased.

15. The Unit enlists the participation of law enforcement officers in its training programmes on human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants.

16. An electronic data collection system for the provision of information for databases on judicial action in relation to trafficking in persons, known as SYSTRAITE, was approved in 2016 and judicial officials have been trained in its use.

4. National Parity Observatory

17. The Observatory is an important mechanism for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Over the period from 2013 to 2015, its budget grew by 50 million CFA francs, from 75 million to 125 million CFA francs.

18. In terms of its legal status, the Observatory is an independent administrative authority, in accordance with Decree No. 2011-819 of 16 May 2011. Its senior managers have never encountered any obstacles or, in the exercise of their functions, received instructions from any authority.

5. Human Rights Directorate

19. Pursuant to Decree No. 2018-1070 of 31 May 2018 on the organization of the Ministry of Justice, the Human Rights Directorate has been reorganized to enhance its efficiency. It is now divided into three offices:

- Office for the Promotion and Dissemination of Human Rights;
- Office of Training, Studies and Research;
- Office for Follow-up to International Commitments and Relations with National and International Human Rights Organizations.

20. Between 2016 and 2018, four officers were seconded to the Directorate: two lawyers, one executive assistant and one administrator.

21. Its budget has seen a slight increase, from 28 million CFA francs in 2012 to 33 million CFA francs in 2018.

6. National Advisory Council on Human Rights

22. The National Advisory Council on Human Rights has its own budget, which enables it to hold regular meetings. It is also supported by technical and financial partners in the conduct of other activities, such as capacity-building of its members, whose number has increased in step with the growth of the institutions represented.

III. Promotion and protection of human rights

A. Cooperation with international human rights mechanisms

23. Senegal is continuing its constructive cooperation with the international human rights mechanisms. Between 2013 and the present, it has presented or submitted the following reports:

- Periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (29 April 2013);
- Periodic report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (31 July 2013);
- Initial report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (23 March 2015);
- Initial report on the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (28 April 2015);
- Consolidated periodic report 2004–2013 on the implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (23 March 2015);
- Second and third periodic reports on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (25 February 2016);
- Fourth periodic report on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (25 and 26 April 2018).

24. In addition, over the same period, Senegal has received the following visits by special procedure mandate holders:

- Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, from 7 to 17 April 2015;
- Senegal has recently accepted a visit request from the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and is expecting a visit by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

25. The country's election on 16 October 2017 to the Human Rights Council of the United Nations for the third time demonstrates its commitment to continuing this cooperation.

B. Rights of specific groups

1. Children's rights

(a) Children's Code

26. The process of drafting the Children's Code was resumed recently, taking into account the comments of the Technical Committee of the General Secretariat of the Government, on the instructions of the Minister of Justice. In collaboration with the Minister responsible for children's affairs, a select committee was established to finalize the latest version. Following this last phase, the Committee should be able to submit the draft Code by the end of 2018.

27. With regard to the Children's Ombudsman, the Supreme Court has approved the relevant bill, which is to be considered by the Council of Ministers and submitted for legislative processing.

(b) Trafficking of children

28. By circular No. 4131 MJ/DACG of 11 August 2010, the Ministry of Justice instructed the public prosecutors to undertake the systematic prosecution of the alleged perpetrators of these offences and to seek prison sentences for them.

29. Since 2017, the Government has included a Ministry for children's affairs. In accordance with the coordination arrangements for the national child protection strategy, all 45 departments of Senegal are now covered by a network of departmental committees on child protection. Of these departments, 38 already have their own committees.

30. Where cooperation is concerned, Senegal has acceded to, among others, the following arrangements:

- West Africa Network for the protection of children on the move;
- Minimum rules and standards for the care of children in vulnerable situations, adopted by the Economic Community of West African States as a consolidated toolkit for the purpose of returning them to their families;
- Network of coordination arrangements to combat child trafficking between the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, coordinated by Senegal, which is also responsible for the exchange of information.

31. In 2016, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare approved a contingency plan in the area of child protection in emergencies and the training of responders.

32. With regard to the issue of street children, a plan for their removal from the streets was launched on 30 June 2016, structured around three components:

- Removal and reintegration;
- Communication;

- Coordination.

33. This initiative emerged from the presidential directive issued by the Council of Ministers on 22 June 2016.

34. The plan is put into operation by a steering committee composed of all the stakeholders (State services, civil society, and technical and financial partners). It has produced the following outcomes: 1,585 children have been removed from the streets, 278 of whom are Senegalese, 107 Malians and 55 Guineans. These 440 children, of whom 225 are boys and 215 are girls, are accompanied by their mothers, numbering 199 in total. Of the 1,145 remaining unaccompanied children, comprising 1,131 boys and 14 girls, 676 are Senegalese, 407 from Guinea-Bissau, 26 Gambians, 23 Malians and 13 Guineans. For their social reintegration, 24 families and 15 *daaras*, or Qur'anic schools, have been supplied with food packages, hygiene products and subsidies to a total value of 40,141,200 CFA francs. In addition, 60 families have been enrolled in the National Family Welfare Grant Programme and 15 volunteer-run *daaras* funded through microprojects for the families' social reintegration.

35. The Senegalese border police has stepped up its migration controls to prevent children from being smuggled by traffickers. The total number of border checkpoints has been increased from 45 in 2014 to 77 in 2018. In order to cross the border, children must now be accompanied by their legal representative, or they will be returned to their country of origin and handed over to the police of that country.

36. Preventive actions are carried out regularly by the police in targeted locations, such as major roads, the forecourts of certain financial institutions, food and beverage consumption areas, and the areas around traffic light intersections.

37. A programme called Operation Épervier ("Operation Sparrowhawk"), carried out with the participation of national stakeholders, was run from 6 to 10 November 2017 by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in some countries of the subregion, including Senegal.

38. Human trafficking in all its forms is severely punishable by law. A number of prosecutions and convictions have been recorded in the annual report of the National Unit for the Combating of Human Trafficking and in the evaluation of Act No. 2005-06 on human trafficking. The following procedures are under way at the Dakar Special Regional Court (Tribunal de grande instance hors classe):

- Two preliminary inquiries against four persons opened in March 2017 in the second chamber;
- One inquiry against one person currently under way in the fourth chamber.

39. Senegal is now implementing its third two-year action plan, covering the period 2018–2020.

40. Capacity-building for the judiciary and other officials continues and the number of specialized justice officials is growing.

41. The following actions are being carried out to combat child labour:

- Revitalization of the six regional intersectoral committees to combat child labour (Dakar, Thiès, Diourbel, Saint-Louis, Kaolack and Fatick);
- Building the capacity of State officials and civil society stakeholders in Kédougou to tackle the worst forms of child labour in traditional small-scale gold-mining;
- Strengthening the operational resources of the coordination unit for the combating of child labour with the provision of office furniture and computer equipment and the allocation of a motor vehicle (2015);
- Allocation of funding by the Government since 2014 to support the partial implementation of the actions envisaged under the master plan, focusing on the strengthening of the national legal framework and its alignment with the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization;

- Strengthening the capacity of labour inspectors in the area of human trafficking, in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in 2016.

42. Given that the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour in the world by 2016 has not been achieved, the new strategy is geared towards the target date of 2030, through target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, by taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of child labour in all its forms by 2025.

(c) Juvenile justice

43. Since its creation, the Judicial Training Centre has offered training in the protection of the rights of the child.

44. The organizational approach, which is based on the juvenile courts, has evolved into a holistic system of juvenile justice, leading to the establishment of a module taught by specialized judges and prosecutors.

45. In their initial training, the specialized education trainees attend modules on the legal and judicial protection of minors, to ensure that they are better equipped for their work in the juvenile courts.

46. As part of its in-service training programme, since 2013, the Judicial Training Centre has offered two-year multidisciplinary training-of-trainers courses in juvenile justice for selected members of the judiciary from two regions of the country.

47. The trainees were first selected from Dakar and Thiès, followed by Diourbel and Kaolack and then Kolda and Kédougou. Each session is attended by some 15 future trainers, who will then replicate the training in their respective professional sectors. This activity is part of the human rights dialogue programme between Senegal and Switzerland.

48. At the same time, as part of its cooperation with Belgium (through the agency Wallonie-Bruxelles International), Senegal is pushing forward the project to strengthen the legal protection of minors, launched in 2001.

2. Women's rights

(a) Gender parity and women's empowerment

49. Senegal has taken significant steps in the implementation of its gender policy, including:

- Circular issued by the Office of the Prime Minister in 2013 inviting ministries to take on board the issue of gender, which has facilitated the establishment of 22 gender units;
- Decree No. 2017-313 of 15 February 2017 on the establishment of gender units in the general secretariats of the ministries;
- Adoption of the second national strategy for gender equality and equity for the period 2016–2026, as outlined in the Emerging Senegal Plan;
- Training sessions for women parliamentarians and women entered as candidates on electoral rolls in advocacy and negotiation skills. These training measures have focused on such key concepts as gender-responsive planning and budgeting, leadership, advocacy and lobbying, and raising awareness of the challenges of gender mainstreaming in public policies;
- The establishment in 2016 of a committee for the review of laws and regulations that discriminate against women, by order of the Minister of Justice. The report on the campaign to permit safe abortion and to incorporate in law the definition of discrimination against women is now being widely disseminated.

50. The 2017 parliamentary elections boosted the number of women in Parliament, although, in relative terms, their proportion has decreased. Thus, 69 women were elected in 2017, compared to 64 in 2012. The Economic, Social and Environmental Council, which is

chaired by a woman, has 23 women among its 120 members, or 19.2 per cent of the total. Its bureau comprises six women and six men.

51. Following the local elections of June 2014, women's representation in local government tripled, rising from 15.9 per cent in 2009 to 47.2 per cent in 2014, with 13,103 women elected to local assemblies out of a total of 27,760 local councillors.

(b) Combating gender-based violence

52. Within the framework of the Priority Solidarity Fund, the Government has launched a project in support of the campaign against gender-based violence in schools, aimed at achieving a multisectoral, interministerial and multilevel approach, both at schools and outside them. The project is aimed at improving girls' access to schools and their retention by the following measures:

- Creating safe learning environments which are gender-sensitive and conducive to reducing gender inequalities in access to and retention in school, in particular for girls;
- Heightening the awareness of ministry officials, teaching staff and communities, including both women and men, of the impact of gender-based violence on school enrolment and the quality of education.

53. The suppression of gender-based violence is also one of the priorities of the Programme for the Improvement of Quality, Equity and Transparency in Education and Training (PAQUET), for the promotion of girls' education.

54. In addition to the departmental child protection committees, stakeholders have at their disposal the school medical inspectorates, gender offices, lower secondary school inspectors (school administration option), awareness-raising and training tools, and a booklet on gender and human rights, currently being finalized.

55. In 2015, stakeholders were familiarized with the standard operating procedures and regional action plans developed in all 14 regions to ensure a concerted response to gender-based violence at the community level.

56. Act No. 99-05 of 29 January 1999 on female genital mutilation has been translated into the country's national languages and widely disseminated.

57. Senegal has launched its first national action plan for the eradication of gender-based violence and the promotion of human rights. Following its implementation, this multisectoral document (covering the period 2017–2021) has led, among its initial results, to the formulation of regional action plans. The action plan covers all aspects of the campaign against violations of women's rights and domestic violence. Legal assistance for victims of rape is guaranteed and psychological and social assistance is provided free of charge for children who have been raped.

(c) Child marriage

58. In 2014, Senegal adopted a policy designed to set in place, through a system of comprehensive protection, a political, institutional and legal environment that counters all forms of violence against women, their families and their communities. The policy represents a holistic response to the practice of child marriage. A national action plan for the elimination of child marriage has been developed and strategies elaborated to ensure that the problem is better understood.

59. Following the recommendations of the African Union Commission, in June 2016 Senegal organized a campaign to end child marriage, with the involvement of non-State entities. This issue was taken on board in preparing the draft children's code and an analytical study of the social, economic and cultural determinants conducive to child marriage was commissioned by the Ministry of Women, Family and Gender in 2016.

3. Rights of persons with disabilities

60. The rights of persons with disabilities are upheld in Senegal by, among other agencies, the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme and the country's universal health coverage agency, CMU. The 2017 internal review noted the following results for the period 2012–2016:

- National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme:
    - 12,911 individual and communal social and economic projects were implemented at a cost of 1.6 billion CFA francs;
    - Expensive care coverage was provided for 72 persons with disabilities at a cost of 69,082,000 CFA francs;
    - Assistive devices were provided for 3,488 persons with disabilities at a cost of 233,884,960 CFA francs;
    - Support for vocational training was provided for 452 young people with disabilities at a cost of 143,786,000 CFA francs;
    - Individual emergency relief benefits were granted to 3,407 persons with disabilities at a cost of 108,492,000 CFA francs;
    - By 30 December 2017, 50,006 equal opportunity cards had been produced.
- CMU for the period 2013–2017:
    - 75 per cent of the population have benefited from access to quality health services through health risk cover;
    - The positive growth of coverage is estimated at some 46 per cent.
- Community-based health insurance:
    - Establishment of 671 mutual health insurance schemes in the 552 communes of Senegal;
    - Enrolment in mutual health insurance schemes of 2,260,000 persons, including members of families supported by the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme.
- Medical assistance:
    - Since the launch of the initiative (October 2013), free care in public health facilities provided on 4,229,178 occasions to children under 5 years of age;
    - Free caesarean sections performed on 38,785 women since 2014;
    - Free care, in dialysis units, administered to 571 persons with chronic kidney failure, in December 2016.

61. In November and December 2016, the Government adopted a national disability measurement instrument to improve the production of statistical data and a national disability action plan (2017–2021), at a projected cost of 47.3 billion CFA francs. The first annual review took place on 5 and 6 December 2017.

62. The Ministry of Education has four institutions specializing in the teaching of children with disabilities:

- National Institute for the Training and Education of Young Blind People (INEFJA), in Thiès;
- Verbotonal Centre in Dakar, for deaf-mute children;
- Talibou Dabo Centre in Dakar, for children with motor disabilities;
- Education and Training Centre for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (CEFDI), in Dakar.

63. To improve access to health care for the poor and for vulnerable groups, the Government has launched such projects and programmes as the equal opportunity card programme, universal health coverage, and the health and nutrition safety-net project.

64. The various social safety-net programmes have been harmonized in response to the directive of the Head of State of 30 April 2015, issued at the time of the official launch of the equal opportunity card programme, by bringing all persons with disabilities who hold equal opportunity cards under the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme and under the universal health coverage system.

65. The new government initiative to provide universal health coverage for all schoolchildren, known as CMU-élèves, which will be extended to talibé children, or children at Qur'anic schools, aims to strengthen children's access to basic social services, including health care.

66. Pursuant to the Social Framework Act, children with disabilities have benefited from the following arrangements designed to uphold their rights:

- Facilities for children with disabilities:
    - Special schools;
    - Inclusive schools;
    - Non-residential counselling centres.
- Medical and social facilities:
    - Keur Xaleyi project;
    - Child Mental Health Centre in Thiaroye.
- Access to schooling: award of scholarships and allocation of school kits to all children with disabilities enrolled in a school in their neighbourhood or in a special school;
- Access to leisure activities: collaboration with Special Olympics.

67. These children, holders of equal opportunity cards, are enrolled in mutual health insurance schemes and the State covers their contributions. Those under the age of 5 receive services free of charge and their families are supported by the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme.

68. In its implementation of the PAQUET programme in the education and training sector, the Government has incorporated a disability perspective into the prototype infrastructure accommodating school-age children.

69. In 2013, 5,244 classrooms were specially adapted to the needs of pupils with disabilities, the largest percentage of these — 30.9 per cent — forming part of the Academy of Ziguinchor.

70. The conduct of other actions has made it possible:

- To create new specialized facilities providing a 10-year basic education for children living with severe disabilities in all regional or departmental capitals;
- To train special education teachers, support staff and paramedics;
- To strengthen the capacity of teachers to care for children with disabilities;
- To establish inclusive schools in each local authority area and to promote their interaction with specialized centres;
- To support the existing specialized schools catering for children with special educational needs, through such measures as the regular replacement of equipment and teaching materials.

71. Following the issuance by the Ministry of Vocational Training, Apprenticeships and Handicrafts of circular No. 4322/MFPAA/SG/DFPT/ms of 23 December 2016 on incentive

measures targeting a number of institutions for the vocational training of persons with disabilities, the following results were achieved in 2017:

- Skills training for 49 persons with disabilities in various trades;
- Registration of 93 persons with disabilities and the provision in all regions of 606 vocational training scholarships for young people with disabilities, over the period from 2012 to 2017, in the second phase of the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme, at a cost of 188.7 million CFA francs.

4. Minority rights

72. The Constitution prohibits any act of racial, ethnic or religious discrimination and any regionalist propaganda that may undermine the internal security of the State.

73. The Criminal Code criminalizes the levelling of insults against a group of persons belonging to a particular race or religion for the purpose of stirring up hatred.

74. The law does not prohibit the freedom of sexual orientation but rather lewd or unnatural acts that are tantamount to indecent behaviour.

C. Civil and political rights

1. Combating torture and improving the living conditions of persons deprived of their liberty

75. To ensure the more effective prevention of torture and to strengthen the rights of defence, Senegal has amended article 55 of its Code of Criminal Procedure (Act No. 2016-30 of 8 November 2016) and has recently issued circular No. 00179/MJ/DACG/MN of 11 January 2018 on the procedures for the application of article 5 of regulation No. 05/CM/UEMOA on a person's right to legal counsel from the moment of arrest.

76. Sentences are handed down against law enforcement officers convicted of abuse. Judicial proceedings have been cancelled for violation of the aforementioned article 55.

77. Awareness-raising and training in the prohibition of torture are obligatory for public officials. The initial training programmes of the National Prison Officers Training College, the Police College and the National Gendarmerie Officers College now include a module on human rights.

78. Today, a number of the country's police and gendarmerie stations have separate custodial facilities for women and children.

79. In order to combat prison overcrowding, construction work and refurbishment were carried out between 2013 and 2017, in the following penal establishments:

- Rebeuss remand prison (2014–2015);
- Liberté VI prison camp (2017);
- Liberté VI women's remand prison (2016);
- Thiès remand and correctional facility (construction of two new multiple-occupancy cells, a juvenile wing and a women's wing in 2017, including for women imprisoned with their children);
- Foundiougne remand and correctional facility (refurbishment of three multiple-occupancy cells in 2017);
- Fatick remand and correctional facility (construction of a women's wing in 2017);
- Sébikotane correctional facility (construction of a prison with 500 places currently being completed);
- Koutal prison camp (construction of eight multiple-occupancy cells with a total capacity of 480 places, work on which started in late 2017).

80. As a result, the country's prison capacity has been increased from 3,815 square metres in 2014 to 4,224 square metres in 2017.

81. The review of sentences is also helping to alleviate prison congestion. From 2013 to 2017, 1,274 convicts were released on parole and 8,205 were pardoned.

82. Over the period 2016–2017, the prison occupancy rate fell by 6 percentage points, from 244 to 238 per cent.

83. Where prisoners' meals are concerned, the daily maintenance allowance has been increased from 600 CFA francs in 2013 to 1,023 CFA francs in 2018, a rise of 423 CFA francs in six years. At the usual hours, meals of sufficient quality and quantity are served to prisoners, in accordance with human rights standards. Prisons are equipped with medical facilities with specialized staff. Rebeuss remand prison and the medical and social centre of Liberté VI prison camp in Dakar are equipped with dental chairs for the treatment of oral diseases. Le Dantec Hospital in Dakar has a special ward for the inpatient treatment of prisoners with serious illnesses.

84. In a sectoral policy letter for the period 2018–2022, the Ministry of Justice provides for the construction of 10 new penal establishments and 9 hospital units and the refurbishment of 8 penal establishments.

2. Right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly

85. This right is enshrined in the Constitution. The stability and equilibrium of Senegal are constantly ensured by the plurality of the country's media outlets, the extent of its community-based networks, the inclusion of minorities, and its democratic pluralism.

86. It is prohibited for the security forces, in the performance of their law-enforcement tasks, to use force except when it is necessary and in moderation, in accordance with operational requirements.

87. The security forces receive initial and in-service training in crowd management, consistent with human rights and law enforcement legislation.

88. Freedom of expression is shored up by the new Press Code, adopted on 20 June 2017.

3. Peacebuilding in Casamance

89. With the aim of consolidating sustainable peace and development in Casamance, the Government has initiated, among other measures, the following projects and programmes:

- Support programme for the economic development of Casamance, known as PADEC, implemented until 2015, which helped to improve the living conditions of women and men by increasing the income generated by business operators, broadening the range of services offered, and strengthening oversight of the response capacity of the technical agencies. The specific aim is to ensure that the production factors are more effective and that the marketing channels are profitable.
- Casamance Development Hub Project, or PPDC, which comprises the following three elements:
    - Support for agricultural production and commercialization of value chains;
    - Rural accessibility;
    - Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

90. To date, the administrative and judicial authorities have not been apprised of any cases of enforced disappearance.

4. Administration of justice and right to a fair trial

(a) Independence of the judiciary

91. The independence of judges has been further strengthened by Organizational Act No. 2017-11 of 17 January 2017 on the organization and functioning of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, through the following measures:

- Increase in the number of members elected to the Council;
- Requirement of a majority of votes for the removal of a judge;
- Establishment of the right to a remedy against decisions to impose sanctions on a judge.

92. The new Organizational Act No. 2017-10 of 17 January 2017 on the status of the judiciary has established, as part of the evaluation of a judge's professional conduct, the right of appeal against an appraisal by the judge's supervisor.

(b) Hissène Habré trial

93. The proceedings against the perpetrators of serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Chad in the period from 7 June 1982 to 1 December 1990 were held within a reasonable period of time. Following initiation of the proceedings on 8 April 2013, the judgment on appeal by the Extraordinary African Chambers was handed down in June 2016 with full respect for all the rights of the defence.

D. Economic, social and cultural rights

1. Right to education

94. The Ministry of Education is pursuing a policy to upgrade the quality of teaching and learning at all levels. The Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education has developed a guidance note for the 2017–2018 school year as a follow-up to the recommendations emerging from an assessment of the skills of incoming pupils in primary school carried out in June 2015. The note stresses the need to strengthen the cognitive dimension through skills development focusing on numbers and spatio-temporal concepts.

95. In addition to being transmitted to the academy inspectorates and the education and training inspectorates, the guidance note has been piloted in three academies to assess the extent of its ownership by educationists operating at the decentralized level. Early learning methods to teach children to read must first be tried out in preschool facilities.

96. The PAQUET programme, which is intended to put the country's education policy into operation, has identified three major approaches to the integration of the education sector in the Emerging Senegal Plan:

- Equitable access to the education system;
- Improved quality of teaching and learning;
- Open, principled and transparent governance of the education system.

97. The Government has allocated over 6 per cent of the country's gross domestic product, or 24 per cent of the total budget, to the PAQUET programme, exceeding the recommendation in the Education 2030 agenda that 20 per cent of the budget should be allocated for education and training. Over the period 2012–2015 alone, the budget for the education and training sector rose significantly, by more than 379 billion CFA francs, or an average of 94.75 billion CFA francs per year.

98. The resources mobilized for the Quality Improvement and Equity in Basic Education Project, known as PAQEEB, one of the flagship projects of the PAQUET programme, are estimated at 108 billion CFA francs. The programme is jointly funded, with the Government of Senegal providing 63.33 per cent, the Global Partnership for Education

21.52 per cent, the World Bank 9.17 per cent and Canadian cooperation agencies 1.33 per cent.

99. In accordance with its mandate and based on an objective assessment of the country's Ten-year Education and Training Programme, which provided the framework for its education and training policy over the period 2000–2010, the Ministry of Education is engaged in the preparation and adoption of a new general policy letter for the period 2013–2025, to be based on the PAQUET programme for its operationalization in the education and training sector.

100. Schoolchildren, their parents, community leaders, school management committees, teachers, mayors and district courts have all been made aware of the importance of birth registration as a condition of access to education.

101. Gender parity at the primary education level has been achieved through a policy of promoting the education of girls, which is pursued through the Coordinating Committee for Action on Girls' Education (CCIEF). The ratio is currently in favour of girls in primary schools.

102. Under the second phase of the Project to Support the Education of Girls (PAEF), which is active in 149 educational facilities, including 27 lower secondary schools (*collèges d'enseigement moyen*) and upper secondary schools (*lycées*) across the country, the following actions have been taken:

- Multiple awareness-raising campaigns on the easing of domestic work, gender-based violence and early marriages and pregnancies, through the implementation of a national and community-level communication plan;
- Celebration every year of the National Day for the Education of Girls;
- Establishment in June 2016 of a network of heads of private schools to support the actions of the Ministry of Education to promote girls' education;
- Provision of support to 122 school mothers' associations, in the amount of 300,000 CFA francs per association, for the development of income-generating activities, with the transfer of 50 per cent of the profits to the account of the school management committee, to care for girls in difficulty;
- Allocation of kits, educational materials and sanitary pads;
- Organization of female leadership camps for women teachers with additional training in such areas as communication, education and the law, information and communication technology in education, and others;
- Support for the organization of the "Miss Mathematics" and "Miss Science" competitions;
- Preparation of a guide for the training of trainers in gender and a teacher's manual on gender mainstreaming in teacher training benchmarks;
- Gender training for the compilers of curriculum support materials and for mentoring and monitoring bodies;
- Preparation of a training manual on gender-based violence in schools and conduct of a study on social and anthropological factors that impede girls' access to education;
- Adaptation of school construction standards to the specific needs of girls, including in the area of hygiene;
- Provision of uniforms to all girls and boys in 122 schools sponsored by the support programme for female education and women's empowerment for inclusive local development (PAEF-Plus) — 35,000 uniforms provided in 2015;
- Allocation of bursaries to 971 school mothers' associations in 2015 and 4,000 school mothers' associations in 2016, at a rate of 30,000 CFA francs per schoolgirl at primary level and 50,000 CFA francs per schoolgirl at lower secondary level;

- Distribution of awards to the top-achieving girls and organization of coping courses for girls in difficulty;
- Organization of science summer camps;
- Training of persons in positions of responsibility to ensure an effective response to issues of violence in schools.

103. These efforts have had the following significant impacts:

- The upswing in the gross enrolment rate demonstrates the improvement in primary schooling, where the proportion of girls has reached a high point of 93.86 per cent, compared to 81.10 per cent for boys;
- The gender parity index is 1.16 in favour of girls; their dropout rate is 9.60 per cent, compared to 11.02 per cent for boys; and the transition rate from CM2 — the last year of primary school — to grade 6 — the first year of secondary school — is 65.38 per cent among girls.

104. At the preschool level, the gross pre-primary enrolment rate was 17.80 per cent in 2016. It measured 19.20 per cent for girls, compared to 16.50 per cent for boys.

105. The basic reference texts have been redrafted to clarify the goals of the PAQUET programme, its processes and procedures, with a view to stepping up oversight of the programme to enable it to achieve those goals. To that end, the following measures have been taken:

- Decree No. 2017-604 of 24 April 2017 amending Decree No. 2012 of 13 November 2012;
- Decree No. 2013-738 of 7 June 2013 on the primary school-leaving certificate;
- Decree No. 2013-913 of 1 July 2013, amending the provisions of Decree No. 2000-586 of 20 July 2000 and establishing the Arabic baccalaureate examination;
- Decree No. 2014-632 of 7 May 2014 establishing time credits and coefficients in general secondary education;
- Decree No. 2014-633 of 7 May 2014 on the procedure for the evaluation of learning at lower secondary and upper secondary levels;
- Decree No. 2014-570 of 6 May 2014 on the establishment and organization of the lower secondary school-leaving certificate;
- Decree No. 2014-777 of 22 June 2014 on the Inspectorate-General of Education and Training;
- Decree No. 2014-904 of 23 July 2014 on the organization and functioning of school management committee unions, to enable the direct transfer of school credits;
- Opening of bank accounts for the 8,146 primary schools, for the non-cash payment of allocated funds.

106. The country's potential demand for education, according to projections from the 2013 general population, housing, agriculture and livestock census, is to be found in its school-age population between the ages of 6 and 11.

107. In 2017, this demand is estimated at 2,391,343 children, including 1,161,576 girls, or 48.57 per cent. Most of this population is concentrated in Dakar, with 18.22 per cent; Thiès, with 12.87 per cent; and Diourbel, with 12.03 per cent. The lowest proportions are recorded in Matam (4.68 per cent), Sédhiou (3.85 per cent), Ziguinchor (3.60 per cent) and Kédougou (1.18 per cent).

108. In 2017, the population of children at primary school entry age (6 years) was estimated at 419,196, including 203,547 girls, or 48.55 per cent of the total. From 6 to 11 years, the numbers of children drop from 419,196 to 376,025. The same trend may be observed for both boys and girls.

109. The diversification of educational opportunity is ensured by the promotion of basic community schools, the upgrading of the *daara* schools, and the development of French and Arabic-medium education and of Arab-Islamic schools.

110. For the promotion of basic community schools serving out-of-school children who have attained primary school age or have dropped out of school at an early stage, the following measures have been taken:

- Provision of care, in the regions of Matam and Kédougou, for 3,000 children aged 9–12, who will ultimately be admitted to primary school at a level commensurate with their ability;
- Opening of five pilot classes for inmates of the Hann-Dakar, Sébikotane, Thiès and Liberté VI remand centres and prison camps;
- Development of a literacy programme for inmates of the country's 36 remand prisons;
- Opening of two classes in Diourbel and Thiès in support of the organization Convergence des Aveugles pour l'Unité, la Solidarité et l'Entraide (CAUSE — Togetherness of the Blind for Unity, Solidarity and Mutual Assistance);
- Opening of three classes for persons with motor disabilities in Hann, Dakar;
- Literacy teaching for children with special needs (children from socially disturbed backgrounds) at the Deni Birame Ndao Centre;
- Opening of five night-school classes, as part of the programme to provide basic education for illiterate young people and adults, known as EBJA;
- Introduction of the EBJA modules to trainee teachers at the regional teacher-training centres, under way since 2014;
- Opening of 190 basic community schools in Diourbel and Kaffrine under the Literacy and Occupational Apprenticeship Programme to Combat Poverty (PALAM) and 12 basic community schools under a project run by the Millennium Villages non-governmental organization, in Louga;
- Building and furnishing of 160 basic community schools:
- Training of 5,973 students, 66.4 per cent of whom are girls;
- Launching of production microprojects for each basic community school, to promote reintegration into working life;
- Training of over 1,500 multiskilled teachers as part of the educational capacity-building project.

111. The commitment shown by Senegal to the promotion of literacy in general and, in particular, basic education for illiterate young people and adults, was recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which awarded Senegal the UNESCO literacy prize in 2016.

112. The country's interest in developing French and Arabic-medium education and Arab-Islamic schools is pursued through the PAQUET programme. Senegal currently has 527 French and Arabic-medium schools, of which 37 are lower secondary schools and 12 upper secondary schools.

113. Universal enrolment, according to the new policy letter, is aimed at the completion of primary education. Senegal has set itself the target of a 100 per cent completion rate by 2020.

114. Accordingly, the budget of the Ministry of Education was boosted by 38,611,941,882 CFA francs over the period 2016–2017, from 398,694,495,439 CFA francs to 437,306,837,321 CFA francs, or 8.83 per cent.

115. To consolidate those gains, 11 specific measures were adopted on the occasion of the Presidential Council on Education in August 2015.

116. Over the period from 2012 to 2016, the following achievements were scored through specific projects and programmes:

- *Early childhood*: six care structures were built, at a cost of 170,000,750 CFA francs, including government-funded preschool centres in primary schools.
- *Primary education*: 7,814 classrooms, 1,140 washroom facilities, 743 administrative blocks, 530 water points and 27 boundary walls were built at a cost of 49,560,557,165 CFA francs, and 333 complete primary schools with an estimated value of 12,452,733,327 CFA francs, one of which was built by China, at a cost of more than 700,000,000 CFA francs. Added to this, six primary schools were refurbished at a cost of 175,938,727 CFA francs. Two school complexes were also built, at a cost of 4,030,002,345 CFA francs.
- *Lower and upper secondary education*: 1,661 new classrooms were constructed and equipped, boosting the capacity of the schools or replacing temporary facilities. In addition, 70 administrative blocks, 268 washrooms, 54 boundary walls and 19 water points were constructed, at a cost of 24,894,432,427 CFA francs; a total of 162 middle schools have already been built or are under construction. The funding of these facilities is estimated at 16,680,143,685 CFA francs. In addition, 10 middle schools are currently being extended or refurbished, nine of these in Dakar, at a cost of 2,098,166,286 CFA francs.

117. As part of the drive to promote the teaching of science and mathematics, science and technology blocks are being built.

118. In 2018, 2,985 preschool and primary teachers and 1,550 lower secondary and upper secondary teachers have been recruited.

- *Daaras*: In developing the PAQUET programme, the Government has taken on board social and cultural realities, which in turn pose challenges to the policy of upgrading the *daaras*, with a view to transforming them into instruments of diversification, offering services designed to accommodate those excluded from the system. A number of initiatives, mounted in particular since 2012, have been undertaken with development partners such as the Islamic Development Bank, which provided a total of 10,032 million CFA francs in funding for the *daara* upgrading programme, known as PAMOD, for the following purposes:
    - Construction and furnishing of 64 modern *daaras*, 32 of which are non-public institutions;
    - Bursaries to *daara* scholars in the amount of 300,000 CFA francs. Funding support totalling 3,750 million CFA francs was mobilized as part of the *daara* PAQEEB project to fund this pilot initiative to upgrade 100 *daaras*, allocated as follows: 1,750 million CFA francs from the Global Partnership for Education on a grant basis and 2 billion CFA francs from the State;
    - Funding of 1 billion CFA francs as part of the *daara* primary school upgrading programme, or PAEP, for the building of infrastructure; construction of 26 *daaras* between 2012 and 2015 in religious centres, such as Touba;
    - Support for 20 preschool *daaras*, provided by the Government in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to improve their functioning;
    - Installation of school canteens in 100 *daaras* under the PAQEEB project, starting from 2014;
    - Development of a *waqf*, or Islamic endowment, to ensure the sustainability of funding for the *daara* upgrading project;
    - Training of the principals of the 32 non-public *daaras* under the PAMOD programme in the field of administrative and educational management, in March 2016;

- Training of 224 Qur'anic teachers, 160 Arabic-medium teachers and 160 French-medium teachers for the non-public *daaras*, launched on 14 July 2016 in the seven regional teacher-training centres in the area covered by the Islamic Development Bank PAMOD programme;
- Support, starting in March 2016, for 20 preschool *daaras* in Pikine and Guédiawaye and 10 in Saint-Louis. The bill on the upgrading of the *daaras* was read by the Council of Ministers on 6 June 2018.

2. Right to health

119. The need for universal access to health services and to uphold the right of women and children to health has been duly taken into account. As part of the universal health coverage programme, activities have been launched to develop basic health insurance through a system of mutual health funds and by strengthening cost-free initiatives towards this end. The provision of free health care for children under 5 years of age and of free caesarean sections in public health facilities in all regions is contributing to improvement of the health of these target groups and helping to reduce household outlays on health.

120. As at 31 December 2017, as part of the universal health coverage programme, through its health insurance component, 676 mutual health insurance schemes had been set up in the country's 552 communes and 45 departmental mutual health unions created, together with their technical management units. The health insurance penetration rate is measured at 37 per cent, representing the enrolment of 2,537,879 persons, including 1,482,924 members of households supported by the National Family Welfare Grant Programme and 17,192 holders of equal opportunity cards. Members of mutual health funds each receive subsidies equivalent to 50 per cent of their contribution and those supported by the National Family Welfare Grant Programme or holding equal opportunity cards receive 100 per cent subsidies.

121. Since the launch of the health assistance scheme, in January 2014, 7,277,550 children under 5 years of age have received treatment free of charge; 45,548 caesarean births have been covered; 567,923 persons aged 60 years and over have received treatment under the senior citizens' health-care initiative known as the Plan Sésame; and 556 patients with chronic kidney failure have undergone dialysis procedures free of charge.

122. The Expanded Programme on Immunization has been widened to include the new pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines for rubella. The pilot phase of the human papillomavirus vaccination programme for girls is continuing, with a view to combating cervical cancer.

3. Poverty alleviation

(a) Access to drinking water

123. A new water code, taking into account the latest guidance on integrated water resource management, has been drafted and submitted for ministerial and parliamentary approval.

124. Act No. 2014-13 of 28 February 2014 establishing the Rural Drilling Authority and the new sectoral policy letter on water resources and sanitation in urban and rural areas set out strategic guidelines and the programmatic framework of action in this area for the period 2016–2025.

125. Where the protection of resources is concerned, officials of the Ministry of Water and Sanitation have received capacity-building in water and sanitation law and have been sworn in before the courts.

126. The Government is pushing forward its work in this area through its strong commitment with budget support (funding of a project to sink 300 boreholes) and the support of technical and financial partners; this in turn enabled Senegal, in 2015, to reach the Millennium Development Goals for safe drinking water in urban and rural areas.

127. Currently, Senegal is working towards the Sustainable Development Goals with the aim of giving full effect to the right to water by implementing the water component of the Emergency Programme for Community Development, aimed at strengthening the water infrastructure in rural areas with a significant expansion of its geographical coverage and increase in the level of access to drinking water in rural areas. Work on the sinking of 200 boreholes is currently in progress.

(b) Access to employment

128. The National Youth Employment Agency, established by Decree No. 2014-29 of 9 January 2014, manifests the country's desire for coherence in the governance of youth employment through the following measures:

- Establishment of an integrated system for reporting on and monitoring target groups in the labour market;
- Strengthening the employability of young people and target groups;
- Ensuring the access of young people and target groups to employment.

129. Other institutions, such as the Ministry of Employment and the Fast-Track Entrepreneurship Delegation, which has been allocated a credit line exclusively for women and young people, are working to promote youth employment.

130. In 2011, Senegal had 461,000 jobseekers. In all, 32.0 per cent of its workforce was underemployed. Young people make up 36.5 per cent of the total working population and their unemployment level is 12.7 per cent. Given this situation, development of the primary sector and of agriculture has been identified as the way forward. Agricultural and community-based programmes have helped to reduce the level of youth unemployment.

(c) Empowerment of local communities

131. The measures taken since 2013 by the Ministry of Local Government to implement the recommendations of the universal periodic review form part of a policy of re-establishing decentralization.

132. In order to combat poverty, the 2013 process of reforming the country's land development, which marks the third phase of the decentralization programme, is aimed at achieving the following:

- Consolidation of the local government system across the entire country;
- Strengthening the financial independence and the legal personality of local authorities, with a view to ensuring the better design, programming and implementation of their development activities;
- Building the financial resources and basic infrastructure of local authorities.

133. In financial terms, their capacity is strengthened every year by the Government through, among other measures, funding from the commune and township support programme, known as PACASEN.

134. Programme delivery is aimed at boosting investment and productivity in order to reduce poverty in all local communities through:

- Emergency Programme for Community Development, with funding of 400 billion CFA francs;
- PROMOVILLE urban upgrading programme.

(d) Campaign against malnutrition

135. Nutrition indicators (underweight, acute malnutrition and chronic malnutrition) over the period from 2010 to 2016 show a distinct and continuous downward trend. This trend is disrupted by periods of deterioration following internal and external upheavals.

136. Since 2013, the country's anti-malnutrition unit has been working in concert with the various relevant ministries in pursuit of the goals set by the State to ensure more effective nutrition and an improved food supply for the population.

137. This strategic approach is the result of the implementation of the voluntary guidelines on the right to food set out in various sectoral policy letters and, since 2016, the country's national nutrition policy, which is implemented through the multisectoral strategic nutrition plan.

138. The national nutrition policy, approved in November 2015, is designed to improve the nutritional status of the population.

139. The multisectoral strategic nutrition plan was launched in 2017 to operationalize the national nutrition policy. Ratified in June 2017, the multisectoral plan is articulated around 12 sectoral action plans involving activities to be undertaken by various ministries which contribute to attainment of the nutrition-related goals. Seven strategic objectives have been broken down into specific targets for the year 2022.

140. The following five activity areas have been identified:

- Prevention and treatment of malnutrition and non-communicable food-borne diseases;
- Combating micronutrient deficiencies;
- Enhancing the availability of diversified, healthy and nutritious food;
- Training, research and innovation;
- Nutrition governance.

141. Over the period 2013–2017, the anti-malnutrition unit implemented the following projects and programmes as part of a concerted legal framework:

- National food insecurity response plan funded by Senegal, the World Bank, UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID);
- Programmes to combat malnutrition in North and North-East departments, supported by AECID and the Andalusian Fund;
- Yélitaré project, for a multisectoral approach to nutrition, targeting the Matam region and Podor department;
- Universal fast-track salt-iodization initiative, known as the PIUS project, supporting the production of adequately iodized salt by small-scale producers, funded by Nutrition International, WFP and UNICEF;
- Project to strengthen resilience to food insecurity and nutrition shocks;
- Results-based financing for the maternal care component under the health and nutrition funding project;
- Food enhancement project, supported by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

142. These projects and programmes are under way in 14 regions and, more specifically, 400 of the 552 communes of Senegal.

4. Cultural rights

143. In accordance with the Bangui Agreements, the Constitution and Act No. 2008-09 of 25 January 2008 on copyright and related rights enshrine the participation of all citizens in cultural life and in creative and intellectual activities. Intellectual property rights consisting of copyright and related rights are protected through the following measures:

- Establishment of the company for the collective management of copyright and related rights (SODAV);
- Formation of a national counter-piracy team;

- Diversification of the funding of culture and of urban cultural development;
- Establishment of a mutual health fund for persons working in the field of culture.

IV. Achievements, best practices, challenges and constraints in relation to the implementation of accepted recommendations and the development of the human rights situation

A. Women's rights

144. Efforts to give effect to women's rights have focused on women's health and empowerment, the school enrolment of girls and the combating of gender-based violence.

145. The issue of gender-based violence is addressed by the booklet on gender and human rights, which also covers the school environment, and by the presence in schools of gender offices responsible for combating such violence. Standard operating procedures have been disseminated in 14 regions to individuals and entities engaged in combating gender-based violence and regional action plans carried out to provide special care for victims at the community level. An action plan for the period 2017–2021 for the eradication of gender-based violence and the promotion of human rights guarantees the right to free legal assistance for rape victims and psychological and social assistance for underage victims.

146. The establishment of gender units in ministries has made it possible to foster a culture of women's rights within the Administration, although impediments are still posed by entrenched cultural, religious and economic attitudes.

B. Children's rights

147. Since 2013, through the national child protection strategy, children's rights have seen positive improvements in several areas. Where schooling is concerned, besides an increase in the rate of school enrolment, the education system has responded to the specific situation of children with disabilities through the establishment of specialized schools and institutions. Operations are being carried out to remove children from the streets, under the plan developed for this purpose in 2016. Strategic plans for the promotion of health in general, and the health of children in particular, are being implemented. At the judicial level, a juvenile justice system in line with international principles and guidelines has been set in place as part of the correctional education and social protection system.

148. The exercise of children's rights is facing certain difficulties, however, related to cultural and religious constraints and the country's general lack of resources.

C. Prisoners' rights

149. By extending and refurbishing existing prisons and building new ones, reviewing sentences and adopting alternatives to imprisonment it has been possible to relieve prison congestion to a significant extent. Other measures have been taken in the areas of health, nutrition and protection of the physical integrity of detainees. Success in upholding all the rights of detainees remains contingent, however, on the country's low economic level.

D. Rights of persons with disabilities

150. Implementation of the National Community-based Rehabilitation Programme, pursuant to the Social Framework Act of 2010, has made it possible to improve the situation of persons with disabilities. By involving persons with disabilities in managing their own situation and through measures such as the equal opportunity card scheme, enrolment in mutual health insurance schemes, the National Family Welfare Grant

Programme and the universal health coverage programme, the situation of persons with disabilities has been improved.

151. At the same time, however, implementation of the Social Framework Act does not adequately observe the principle of physical accessibility of buildings and public transport to persons with disabilities.

E. Political rights

152. One of the key points of the country's constitutional reform in 2016 is the inviolability of the provisions relating to the method by which the President of the Republic is elected, the length of the President's term of office and the number of terms that the President can serve.

153. This reform has strengthened democracy and established new rights for a better distribution of natural resources and improved environmental protection.

154. In the National Assembly, government oversight and evaluation of public policies has been strengthened. A parliamentary commission has been assigned responsibility for human rights. The diaspora has been declared the country's fifteenth region, to be represented by 15 members.

F. National human rights bodies

155. Several national agencies are working for the promotion and protection of human rights. In recent years, a considerable effort has been made to strengthen their capacity and a wide range of financial, human and material resources have been mobilized to enable them better to accomplish their missions.

156. These institutions, however, still come up against the following challenges, constraints and obstacles:

- Lack of funds;

  For some, budgetary autonomy;

- Shortage of human and material resources;
- Repeated changes either to the institution itself or to its mission or duties, or its staff;
- Insufficient statistical data to guide policies for the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Inadequate alignment of the instruments on which their work is based with international human rights instruments;
- Lack of staff training.

157. This situation is primarily attributable to the country's low economic level.

V. Priorities, initiatives and commitments undertaken to overcome challenges and constraints and improve the human rights situation on the ground

158. In order to overcome the difficulties encountered in implementing human rights at the national level, the State has set itself the following priorities:

- Strengthening the national human rights bodies;
- Strengthening and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups;
- Aligning national legislation with international instruments;
- Providing more training for State and civil society stakeholders;

- Strengthening cooperation with all international mechanisms;
- Establishing a civic culture of human rights by raising public awareness and disseminating the relevant instruments;
- Ensuring the protection of human rights by punishing the perpetrators of human rights violations.

159. In line with these priorities, Senegal, a party to almost all the human rights instruments, reaffirms its commitment to submitting its reports and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations put forward by the human rights mechanisms.

160. Where initiatives are concerned, a national human rights strategy is currently being developed and the National Advisory Council on Human Rights has been divided into thematic commissions to ensure the preparation of reports and the implementation of recommendations. The National Advisory Council on Human Rights and the Human Rights Directorate are closely cooperating with the West Africa Regional Office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Senegalese Human Rights Committee.

VI. Expectations in terms of capacity-building and requests for technical assistance and support

161. Senegal would like strengthened technical and financial assistance in the following areas:

- Capacity-building for members of the judiciary (judges, lawyers and other law enforcement officials);
- Support in the drafting of reports;
- Training for political authorities and other public officials;
- Training for civil society;
- Public awareness-raising and dissemination of instruments;
- Monitoring of the implementation of recommendations and submission of reports;
- Building of infrastructure and strengthening of logistical resources.

VII. Conclusion

162. The promotion and protection of human rights have always formed an integral part of the Government's public policies. Under the third priority of the Emerging Senegal Plan, on governance, institutions and security, actions to promote the rule of law, human rights, justice, equity and gender equality are articulated in strategic guidelines.

163. The country's current public policy objectives are, in essence, to improve the accessibility, quality and efficacy of the justice system, including local community justice, the payment of compensation to victims of unjust pretrial detention, the conditions of care of minors, and living conditions in prisons. Other aims include stiffening the penalties for violations of the rights of women, children and minorities, strengthening the institutional and human capacities of the national human rights institutions, the courts and their central and decentralized services, and reducing the duration of pretrial detention.